

County Automated Garbage Collection Starts Monday

26 Oct 1988

Trash cans are being distributed around the County this week, with complete instructions, in time for automated collection to begin Monday.

Curtis Jones, President of Auto-Cart, the firm contracted to collect the trash and transfer it to the Salt Lake Landfill, assured that the \$9.25 per month residential fees, and commercial fees, are as low as possible fee for the service, and significantly lower than many other communities have to pay.

"This was the most economical way [the County] could handle the problem for the immediate future," he said.

Billing for the service will be done by the County. Residents will be billed quarterly, three months in advance, but beginning with only a two-month bill in November.

For the contractor to be able to pay his costs, he must be paid on time. Since there are no funds available other than the fees that

will be collected, user fees must be paid promptly. Therefore, the Wasatch Solid Waste District Board voted to charge a \$10 late fee for accounts delinquent more than 30 days, plus 12 percent interest on the amount in arrears.

Regarding pickup at apartments, in mobile home parks and along other private roads, except in outlying recreational areas, Mr. Jones said he would prefer individual pickup, as long as the roads will accommodate the trucks. However, he said the decision is up to the property owners because his trucks can't trespass on private property without permission. He said some have requested that the trucks go to each home in their mobile home parks and at least one prefers that the residents take their trash to a centralized area for pickup. In those cases, he said trash pickups will be scheduled as often as necessary, rather than once a week.

The pickup schedule in Heber City will be the same as it has been. What has been picked up on Tuesdays, will continue to be picked up on Tuesdays.

He acknowledged that there are a lot of complaints from people who have been taking their own trash to the landfill, without paying fees. Also, Heber City didn't pay to dump at the landfill, and Heber residents are complaining about the increase in their fees. However, Mr. Jones reiterated what County officials have been pointing out, that the landfill has actually cost County citizens (including those in Heber City) \$100,000 per year from their taxes.

He said when automated garbage collection started in Morgan, in 1979, because the City had lost the lease on its landfill, the citizens were adamantly against it.

"If you went over there now, and told them you were going to take away their garbage service and let

them go back to hauling it down to the dump, they'd run you out of town," he said.

He added that Morgan's residential fees are going from \$10.80 per month to about \$13, because their trash has to be transported to the Davis County burn plant, which is raising its dumping fee from \$23 per ton to \$30. By comparison, Wasatch County is only paying six dollars per ton at the Salt Lake County landfill.

Mr. Jones also expressed concern about people who mistakenly think their fees will be reduced significantly when the County builds a local landfill. He said that, instead, the fees will likely go up, at least a little, because of the high cost of building landfills. He provided Park City's costs, as an example, and a copy of the new EPA requirements for landfills, which will be published in next week's *Wave*.



Midway residents were the first in Wasatch County to get the new trash cans, but everyone will get one in time for automated collection to begin Monday.

Somebody Wants Our Garbage!

18 May 1988

Wasatch County's garbage problem is on its way to being solved. The Solid Waste District Board decided last week to advertise for bids on a contract to pick up the trash and transport it to the Salt Lake county dump. In addition, a Wasatch County resident offered to take "clean debris" at a site he owns.

Although the board has thought the solution was to hire a contractor, finding a landfill to accept the trash has been a problem. The Davis County burn plant would accept it, but the cost would have been prohibitive. Both the Summit County Commission and the director of the board that governs the Utah County landfill in Linden refuse to accept Wasatch County trash at their landfills for more than a few months. But Wasatch County needs at least a two-year contract

because it will take at least that long to establish a landfill here.

Commissioner Larry Duke, chairman of the board, reported that Salt Lake County will accept the garbage for as long as necessary and the tipping fee—the cost per ton to unload trash—is only \$5 or \$6, the lowest cost in the region.

One contractor has already submitted a bid to pick up and transport county garbage. He included in his bid picking up all debris that could be expected from a household, i.e. limbs, furniture, besides weekly trash in cans. But he said separate arrangements would have to be made for construction trash, torn down barns, etc. The board is advertising for and inviting additional bids.

Using the contractor's figures as a comparison, Commissioner Duke said it would probably cost the

county more to build a landfill that meets the new EPA standards, maintain it, purchase equipment, and collect the trash. He reported that the people in Morgan are very happy having a contractor collect and haul their garbage, without a local landfill.

"They don't care if they never have [a landfill] again...And they're paying \$9.80 [per month per household]," he said.

The owner of a 42-acre pit in the southwestern part of the Heber Valley, Layne Binggeli, offered to accept construction debris and other non-toxic trash at what used to be a gravel pit. He reported he is already providing the service to contractors and has had no complaints from government agencies or private citizens. He said he wants to reclaim the land for possible future development.

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Somebody Wants Our Garbage!

18 May 1988

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pay tipping fees quarterly, relieving some of the pressure.

Mr. Bradshaw said he expected the county would have to borrow money to operate the first year, but that he would research the options and report back. He added that the county might go after a subsidy from some of the extra money in the state budget.

In the meantime, the board is continuing to try to find a local site suitable for a landfill. All the sites it has recommended so far have been rejected by the State Department of Wildlife management as important wildlife habitat. Commissioner Duke has made the point that two-thirds of Wasatch County land is owned by government agencies, which doesn't leave much available for a landfill. County Attorney Steve Hansen is investigating possibilities for going after a government-held site through the court system.

Commissioner Duke reported that Val Draper, a board member who was excused from the meeting, had volunteered to present the problem and request support from the governor and other state representatives during the county Republican convention.

State officials, including the governor, are supporting the skating rink in Midway, Councilman Shelton noted. "They're all gung-ho to put that in. I wonder if they shouldn't show an equal amount of interest in supporting us on something that's really needed in this valley—not a luxury, but a necessity."

The board agreed that would take care of the needs of county residents who haul "clean debris" to the dump regularly and who have expressed concern about not having a local site available.

Mr. Binggeli also offered his property for a temporary transfer station, where garbage trucks could dump their loads into large trailers which would then haul all the trash to the Salt Lake dump.

Several other major problems must still be resolved. One is that the present landfill, next to the

Heber City airport is due to be closed June 30, to comply with Federal Aviation Administration regulations. But it will take three or four months for a contractor to get the automated equipment and special trash cans. A contractor can't be selected until June 1, which means it will be September or October before service can begin.

Midway Councilman Grant Shelton, a member of the board, suggested that the private contractors picking up trash in the county could continue as they are. Since Heber crews are through picking up city trash by 11 a.m., a second shift could be added to cover the rest of the county. They could haul it to Salt Lake instead of dumping it locally, he said.

Another possibility that hasn't been totally ruled out by the board is for the county to purchase the

equipment on a lease-purchase agreement, hire the crews, pick up and haul its own garbage.

Financing the operation and purchase of equipment is another problem, whether a contractor is hired or not. The board has tentatively decided to charge a user fee rather than request a mill levy, either quarterly or annually, but it would take several months to set up the system. Residents could be billed for garbage service on their tax notices, but Jeff Bradshaw, clerk-auditor, said he didn't think people could be billed in advance so next fall's billing could be for only half a year.

A contractor would expect a check each month, the board noted, and the county doesn't have the money in its budget. Mr. Binggeli suggested arrangements might be made with the Salt Lake landfill to

Editorial

A Trashy Job, But Somebody Has To Do It

21 Sep 1988

One of the least popular and most criticized groups in Wasatch County is the governing board of the Wasatch County Solid Waste Special Service District. They are never called by that long name. One nickname they've been dubbed with is "that garbage committee," often spoke with disgust.

However, *The Wave* has been represented at many of the Board's meetings. We have watched as they have tried to solve the County's garbage problem, starting with a search for a local landfill, then scurrying for alternatives when they realized it would be at least a couple of years before a site could be found and prepared. We've seen them excited at the prospect of solutions, then frustrated when their hopes were shot down.

Now that the problem is solved, people seem to be saying, "Well, it's about time," instead of offering congratulations and appreciation to a group of volunteers who have worked very hard to find a way to get rid of our garbage. Maybe the reason is that everyone doesn't understand how difficult an assignment it has been.

To begin with, none of the Board members started out knowing much about landfills or garbage collection. They've had to become experts on the job.

They also started out naive enough to think federal and state agencies would cooperate and be helpful, maybe compromising a little to help the County find a spot to dump its trash. Instead, they learned that they are going to have to find a landfill *in spite* of those agencies.

When they decided they would have to take the garbage outside the County, they found that either nobody wanted it or that they would have to pay through the nose for the service. But they didn't want to burden County residents with high user fees.

And, all the while, Heber City was applying pressure to hurry and close the landfill because it was adjacent to the City airport, against FAA regulations.

Lots of people offered suggestions, like, "Dig a landfill in that *guy's* neighborhood." But no one came forward with realistic possibilities or offered to sit in one of the hot seats on the Board.

But the Board kept doggedly plugging along until suddenly the clouds cleared and a little sun began to shine on them. Heber City extended the deadline on closing the landfill and an expert in garbage collection and landfill operations walked into one of their meetings. Romney Stewart could answer all their questions and some they hadn't even thought of, yet. They hired him as a consultant, on the spot, and hustled to do everything that needed to be done, relieved to have someone in charge who could give them direction.

Lest we be misunderstood, we want to make it clear that we are not faulting Commissioner Larry Duke, Chairman of the District Board, or the committee members, for accepting an assignment they were not qualified to complete. Rather, we admire their guts. None of them pretended to be qualified, but they've stuck it out, learning along the way — and that's the hard way.

We think they've done a darned good and thorough job. We are confident that the contractor they have hired is the most competent to get our garbage out of our sight and away from our noses. We are sure that the monthly fees will be the lowest possible for excellent service.

Now, let's offer the people on the unglamorous "garbage committee" our congratulations and appreciation. They've earned it.

Garbage Collection To Begin Mid-October

The contract for collecting Wasatch County garbage and transporting it to the Salt Lake County landfill was awarded last week to Auto Cart.

The system will operate similar to the Heber City system. Curtis D. Jones, manager of the company, told the County Solid Waste District that board trash containers will begin to arrive next week and will have to be assembled. He said they will be distributed in about a month and residents may begin to use them as soon as they get them.

The automated trucks are expected in about 30 days.

In the meantime, the District Board will determine what each user will have to be charged and setting up the billing system. Although Auto Cart will be charging \$6.93 per residential pickup, costs for administration and billing will have to be added.

Mr. Jones said his trucks will pick up any trash that will fit in the containers. Bulky waste, like furniture and large appliances may be delivered to a compactor at 2115 West Highway 189 (Prairie Steel). Cards will be issued to County residents that will entitle them to free use of the compactor. The cards

will be distributed at the same time as the canisters.

Mr. Jones assured that there will be no unsightly trash strewn around or in piles, and no odors or flies. The trucks that pick up garbage will transport it directly to Salt Lake. The compactor will immediately crush and seal bulky waste and the entire hopper will be loaded onto a truck to be taken to Salt Lake.

Auto Cart will be responsible to replace damaged containers, no matter what the cause, with one exception. Since the containers will melt, if people put hot ashes in

them, they will have to be responsible for the damages. The new containers will be of higher quality than those now used in Heber City, Mr. Jones said. He said he expects to have to replace many of the Heber containers during the period of the contract, but there will be no additional cost to the residents.

Commercial-size containers will be provided for businesses and Auto Cart will pick up commercial trash on the same schedule as Heber City's pickups have been.

The Binggeli landfill, in Charleston, will be available for construction trash. It is a private

landfill and will continue to operate independent of the District.

People in the County, who have taken their own trash to the County landfill without charge, have already begun to complain about being charged. Commissioner Larry Duke has pointed out they have actually been paying for the service through the County's general fund.

Kent Berg, Public Works Director, reported that because no one has had to pay to dump at the landfill, people from outside the County have been using it.

He said while he was at the landfill, recently, "Two guys drove

up from Salt Lake County. They said it was cheaper to haul their garbage from Salt Lake County to the Wasatch County landfill, free, than it was to take it [to the Salt Lake landfill], particularly because they were going fishing at Strawberry."

"The day of the free lunch is over," added Commissioner Duke.

The Board is considering two possibilities for billing, using systems that are already set up, in order to save costs.

They have discussed the possibility of adding garbage collection

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Garbage Service Bids To Be Opened Aug. 30

8-24-90

The bids to collect and transport Wasatch County trash to Salt Lake County landfill will be opened Aug. 30. The County Waste Disposal Special Service District Board will examine and discuss the bids the following night, to be sure they meet the specifications, and award the contract.

Commissioner Larry Duke, chairman of the board, said he thought the contract would probably go into effect about 30 days later.

"There are enough variables that

I anticipate that we're going to have quite a bit of discussion on it," said Commissioner Larry Duke.

He said bidders were asked to indicate how soon they would be able to begin operation and to propose interim plans for picking up the trash until the automated system can be in place.

Although there has been a lot of pressure from Heber City to close the present landfill to meet Federal Aviation Administration regulations, he said the Council is being reasonable and cooperative.